

SPORTS REVIEW

August 1980

47817  \$1.25

Wrestling



Hulk Hogan's Shocking Claim:

**"BOB BACKLUND
BEGGED ME
NOT TO
HURT HIM!"**

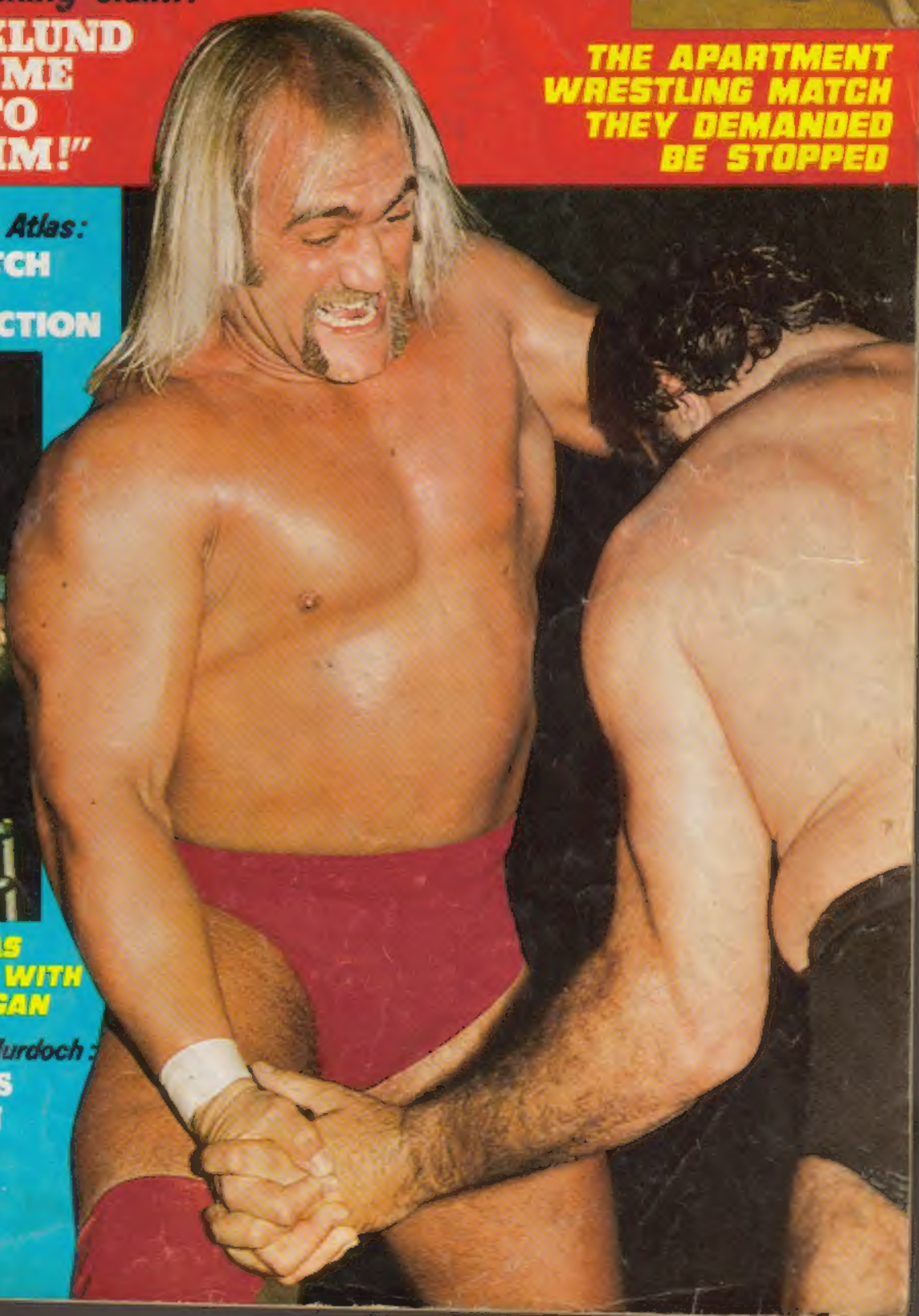
**THE APARTMENT
WRESTLING MATCH
THEY DEMANDED
BE STOPPED**

Harley Race vs. Tony Atlas:
**THE TITLE MATCH
THE NWA
REFUSED TO SANCTION**



**ONLY ANDRE HAS
THE GUTS TO TEAM WITH
BLACKJACK MULLIGAN**

Dusty Rhodes & Dick Murdoch:
**THE OUTLAWS
RIDE AGAIN**



OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS

WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION

Champion: BOB BACKLUND

- 1—LARRY ZBYSZKO
- 2—HULK HOGAN
- 3—KEN PATERA
- 4—PAT PATTERSON
- 5—IVAN PUTSKI
- 6—TONY ATLAS
- 7—PEDRO MORALES
- 8—TITO SANTANA
- 9—BOBBY DUNCUM
- 10—SIKA THE SAMOAN

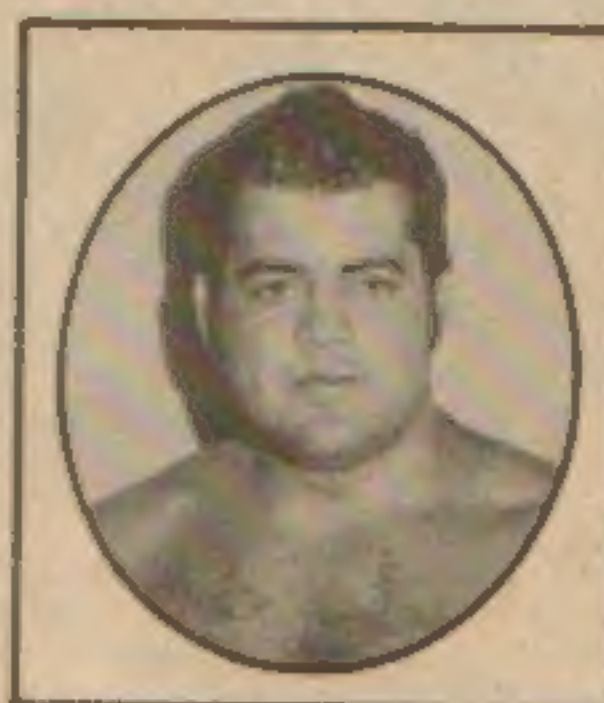
AMERICAN WRESTLING ASSOCIATION

Champion: NICK BOCKWINKEL

- 1—CRUSHER
- 2—DINO BRAVO
- 3—VERNE GAGNE
- 4—GREG GAGNE
- 5—BILLY ROBINSON
- 6—MAD DOG VACHON
- 7—JESSE VENTURA
- 8—JERRY LAWLER
- 9—ADRIAN ADONIS
- 10—JERRY BLACKWELL

MOST POPULAR

- 1—ANDRE THE GIANT
- 2—BRUNO SAMMARTINO
- 3—DUSTY RHODES
- 4—MR. WRESTLING II
- 5—BOB BACKLUND
- 6—CHIEF JAY STRONGBOW
- 7—RICK STEAMBOAT
- 8—DINO BRAVO
- 9—DAVID VON ERICH
- 10—GREG GAGNE



PEDRO MORALES



GREG GAGNE



RIC FLAIR



ANDRE THE GIANT

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE

Champion: HARLEY RACE

- 1—DUSTY RHODES
- 2—RIC FLAIR
- 3—MR. WRESTLING II
- 4—DON MURACO
- 5—AUSTIN IDOL
- 6—KEVIN VON ERICH
- 7—JIM BRUNZELL
- 8—LEROY BROWN
- 9—STAN STASIAK
- 10—TED DIBIASE

TAG TEAMS

- 1—THE SAMOANS
- 2—GREG VALENTINE & RAY STEVENS
- 3—VERNE GAGNE & MAD DOG VACHON
- 4—JACK BRISCO & JIM GARVIN
- 5—KEVIN SULLIVAN & TONY ATLAS
- 6—IVAN PUTSKI & TITO SANTANA
- 7—MASKED SUPERSTARS
- 8—MR. HITO & MR. SAKURADA
- 9—IVAN KOLOFF & ALEXIS SMIRNOFF
- 10—TOMMY & EDDIE GILBERT

MOST HATED

- 1—LARRY ZBYSZKO
- 2—AUSTIN IDOL
- 3—JIMMY SNUKA
- 4—TERRY FUNK
- 5—IVAN KOLOFF
- 6—HULK HOGAN
- 7—HARLEY RACE
- 8—NICK BOCKWINKEL
- 9—EDDY MANSFIELD
- 10—MASKED SUPERSTAR

TATTLER

CORRESPONDENTS

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Seattle, Wash.

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Andre Camus

Montreal, Canada

Buddy Ford

St. Louis, Mo.

Masanori Murikami

Tokyo, Japan

Andy Rankowski

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Myron Roth

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Kevin McCloud

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Leroy Jackson

Detroit, Mich.

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Virginia W. Sloan

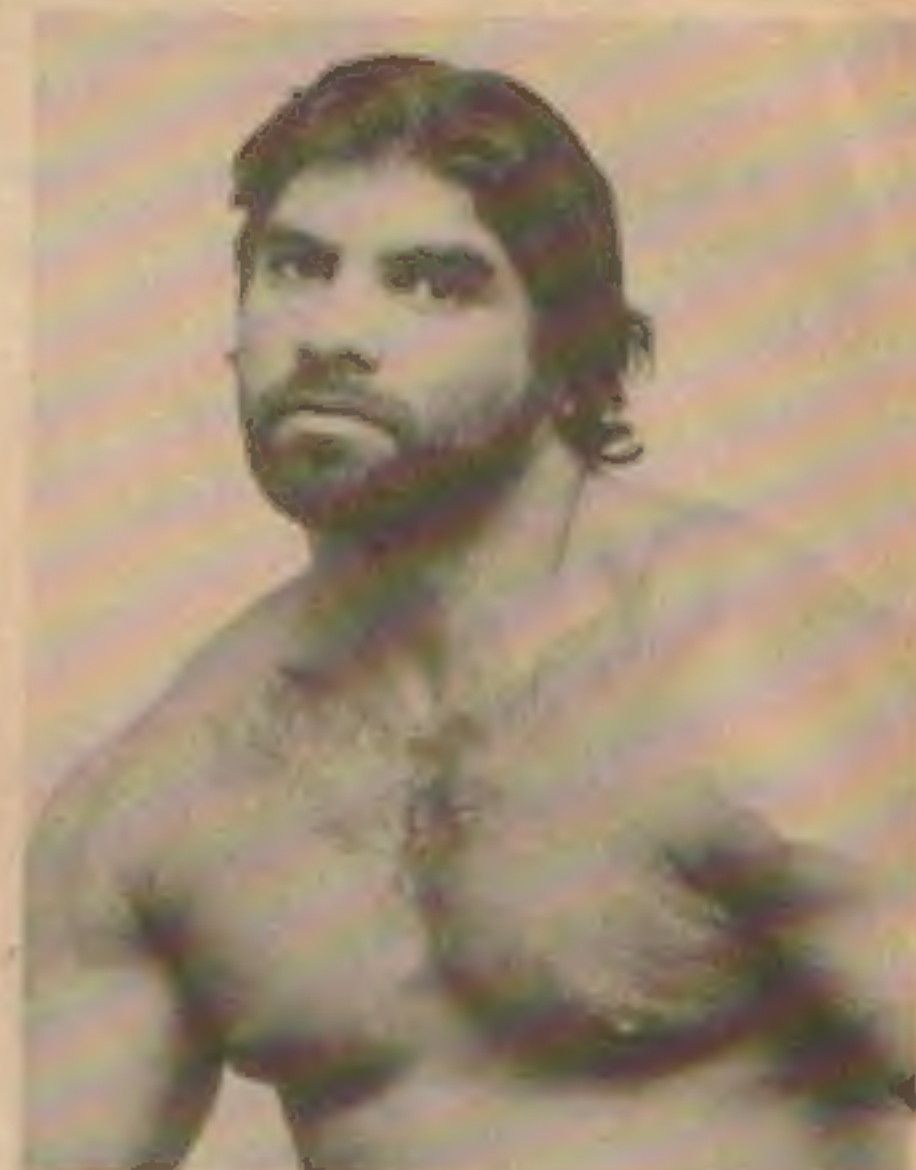
Amarillo, Tex.

Randy Swift

Memphis, Tenn.

Barry Simon

Tampa, Fla.



DON MURACO

TAMPA, FL—All Florida wonders what kind of champion Don Muraco will turn into.

"I'm going to be the best because no man can equal my enormous talent and icy courage," said Muraco, the new Florida heavyweight champion. "After I beat the half-wit, no-talent bum Manny Fernandez, the world is mine."

"Fans will respect me. I will treat all foes fairly. I will give everyone a title shot, whether they deserve it or not. Even fatso Rhodes may be given a shot at my belt, providing he

(Continued on page 56)

Never before in this history of wrestling journalism have so many respected reporters been involved in so important a venture. The best wrestling correspondents from all over the world have been enlisted to report on the news behind the news. Every wrestling fan must consider this the most important column he can read!



From time to time, the editors of this magazine find it necessary to condemn those in wrestling who would subvert the basic principles of decency, integrity, and honesty. Without such truths, our sport will die

WE DEMAND AN end to the cowardly practice of purposeful self-disqualification by champions fearful of losing their belts. The paying public deserves to see a champion defend his belt to the bloody end, if need be, without aborting the bout through self-disqualification.

But how can wrestling implement this daring suggestion? Perhaps it's time for the federation commissions to enact tough, biting rules enforceable by officials. Maybe a champion who, in the eyes of the referee, purposely disqualifies himself should lose the belt on the spot.

Or, to avoid charges of prejudicial referees, perhaps any match a referee believes ended on self-disqualification should be immediately reviewed by league officials. Then, the august body could determine whether the champion defended his title in a manner befitting a titlist.

Of course this is subjective.



We Accuse champions who retain their titles through self-disqualification of being cowards. NWA champion Harley Race (above) has retained his title on numerous occasions in that manner.

All wrestling is a degree of partiality. One man's scientific wrestler is another's rulebreaker. Many matches have frenzied claims of cowardice as post-mortems. How many times have fans read charges by disgruntled contenders that

the champion didn't give them a fair chance? Too many to recall, we're sure.

Naturally any decision by this reviewing body to overturn a decision will cause considerable controversy. Exactly what should

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Bruno Sammartino still thrills the masses when he steps into the ring to do battle (above), and he still finds time to thrill a young individual by signing an autograph (below).

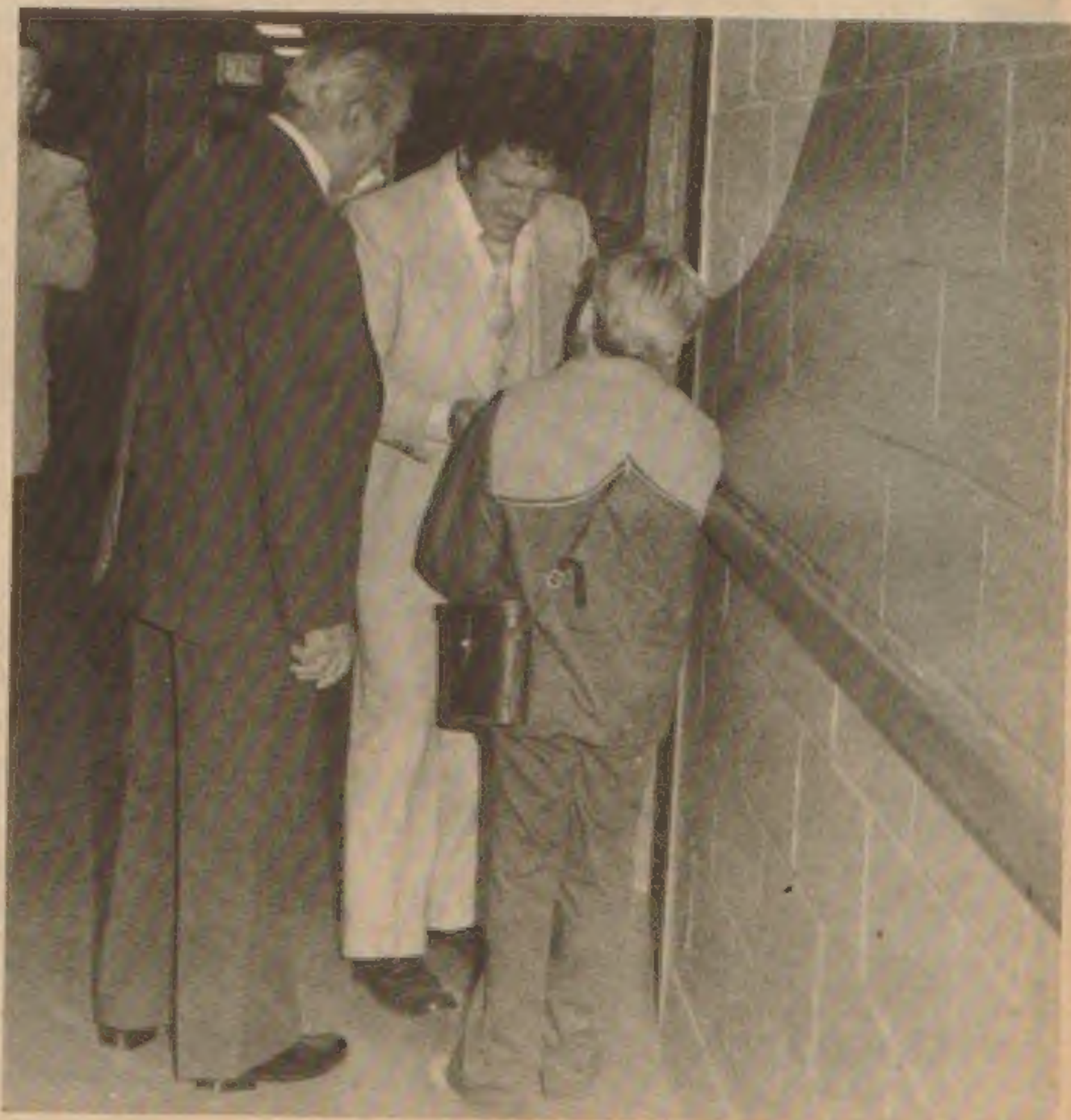
MANY MAY YELL. Many may threaten. Some may have the necessary guts to climb into the ring and implement their verbal assaults. Some, but not many.

However, one man rises above such commonplace standards of honor and courage. One man repays kindness with love, treachery with hate. One wrestler dares to answer critics with his fists, no matter the personal pain.

That man is Bruno Sammartino. For his wounded courage, Sammartino receives **WRESTLER OF THE MONTH**.

"You know, I am always grateful for any recognition from both the press and fans," said Sammartino. "But I know part of the reasoning behind this. Yes, I went after Larry Zbyszko and I'm glad I did. He

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TOP WRESTLE

YOUR QUESTION

Do you have a question which concerns all of wrestling? Each month in **SPORTS REVIEW WRESTLING**, the sport's top superstars will answer a question sent in by a reader. If you wish to have your question answered by the wrestlers, send it to:

ASK THE STARS

Sports Review Wrestling
Box 48
Rockville Centre, N.Y.
11571

The "Question of the Month" is:

"Who is your favorite wrestler?"

Submitted by:
Rich Hegeman,
Eastport,
New York



LOU ALBANO

"Afa and Sika, The Samoans; the greatest, meanest, wildest, most formidable team ever assembled. You can't separate them. Could you separate Laurel and Hardy, Abbott and Costello, Scotch and Soda? No. How can you separate Afa and Sika? You can't. Live with them, watch them, love them for what they are."



SWEET BROWN SUGAR

"My idol has always been Mil Mascaras. I could watch Mil soar through the air all night. I'm, well, I'm just awed by his aerial maneuvers. I try to emulate him though I know I can never be as great as he is. Maybe the highlight of my career was when Mil praised me."



AUSTIN IDOL

"Me, natch. Why would I care about anyone else? I'm perfect. Any half-wit thinkin' about entering wrestling should watch me. Ain't any move I can't do. Ask Tommy Rich and his ruined leg. Ask old man Wrestling II, who ain't Georgia champ no more."



NICK BOCKWINKEL

"Much as I hate to admit this, Billy Robinson is 100 percent class. Least Robinson doesn't look for alibis like most of the bums I face. Robinson fights like a man, without excuses. I actually look forward to matches with Robinson because he's a pure wrestler, through and through."

RS ANSWER OF THE MONTH



J.J. DILLON

"Absolutely no wrestler alive can compete with Prof. Toru Tanaka. Power ripples through his body. His keen Oriental mind gives me an insurmountable advantage in every sort of match. Tanaka can look at an opponent for a second and devise a cunning strategy just like that."



DUSTY RHODES

"Jack Brisco 'cause he moves so smoothly, slippin' and slidin' out of trouble like a cobra. Love to watch Brisco wrestle. I'd pay money myself just to sit up front and watch that man glide and fly across the ring. Now that's a wrestler."



BRUNO SAMMARTINO

"Doggone, this kid Larry Zbyszko had everything: looks, skill, guts, speed, strength. He could beat his way out of a pack of snarling wolves if he had to. You know, this kid was my favorite wrestler until he went crazy and turned against all his friends. I'll let you figure this one out."



GREG VALENTINE

"My great tag team partner, the man who helped me kick the butts of Steamboat and Youngblood outta the NWA belts, Ray Stevens. Ain't no man gonna come outta the ring in one piece when he gets into a match with my man Stevens."



KEN PATERA

"I respect Bruno Sammartino because he's the only man who comes close to equaling me in ability and raw courage. Bruno is a real pro, a man who doesn't whine, a man who doesn't cry, a man who doesn't run. I respect Bruno and I'm not ashamed to say it."



BOB BACKLUND

"Golly, that's a hard one. Some wrestlers appeal to me because of the way they use their speed. Others excite me with their moves. Overall, I'd say the great Verne Gagne is my favorite."

SCRAPBOOK

JUNE 1965

Bruiser paced the dressing room waiting for a doctor. Blood dripped through a towel he pressed against his forehead. He had just failed to wrestle the NWA title away from Lou Thesz and he complained: "I went into the ring tonight in good faith. I wanted to win the title by just straight wrestling. No fouls. No fouls understand? And what does he do? Yeah, the great Lou Thesz. What does he do? He cracks open my skull with a board!" A true account. Almost. What actually happened is Bruiser, frustrated with

trying to counter Thesz's scientific moves, brought the ring steps into the ring, but before he could hit the champion, Thesz seized the steps and slammed it across Bruiser's head. It's not losing that bugs me," Bruiser said. "It's how I lost." Thesz also defended his title against the challenges of Pat O'Connor, Sam Steamboat, and Sputnik Monroe . . . Angelo Savoldi pinned Dandy Jack Donovan in Springfield, Missouri, and then came back a week later to knock Donovan out in the sixth round of a scheduled 10-round boxing match . . . In Detroit, Harley Race and Larry Hennig stopped Verne Gagne and Joe Blanchard . . . Bruno Sammartino retained his WWF championship after

a series of grueling matches with Big Bill Miller . . . Popular youngster Pedro Morales stunned the wrestling world by taking the Americas Title from the Destroyer in Los Angeles . . .
RATINGS: 1-Lou Thesz; 2-Bruno Sammartino; 3-Dr. Bill Miller; 4-Ray Stevens; 5-Fritz Von Erich; 6-Waldo Von Erich; 7-Gene Kiniski; 8-Eddie Graham; 9-Bruiser; 10-Johnny Valentine. TAG TEAMS: 1-The Kangaroos; 2-Bill Watts & Gorilla Monsoon; 3-George Becker & Johnny Weaver; 4-George & Sandy Scott; 5-Rip Hawk & Swede Hanson; 6-Don Leo Jonathan & Roy McClarity; 7-Tito Montez & Omar Atlas; 8-Brute Bernard & Skull Murphy; 9-The Kentuckians; 10-Kurt & Karl Von Brauner.



JUNE 1970

One of the most awesome tag team combinations in the history of wrestling was brought to the WWF by Tony Angelo. The Mongols—Bepo (6-6, 315 pounds) and Gito (6-0, 265 pounds) quickly became the number one contenders for the championship belts held by Tony Marino and Victor Rivera. Crusher Verdu of Spain, who boasted the largest chest (63 inches) in wrestling, stunned the wrestling world by stopping WWF champion Bruno Sammartino on cuts before 20,819 at Madison Square Garden . . . NWA champion Dory Funk Jr. and Nick Bockwinkel engaged in a series of wild bouts in Georgia . . . Bull Curry had the fans on his side in matches against Killer Kowalski . . . Kowalski whipped Waldo Von Erich in Dallas . . . The existing feud between Fred Blassie and Don Carson was interrupted by an even more intense feud between Blassie and The Sheik. Many observers believe that the two were never quite the same after those memorably bloody battles . . . Eddie Graham worked with former NCAA

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Far left: The referee prevents Bruiser from leaping upon Lou Thesz from the ropes. Left: New Americas champion Pedro Morales has his hand raised in victory. Top right: The Mongols terrorized the WWF. Above right: The ref gives prematch instructions to Dory Funk Jr. and Nick Bockwinkel. Right: In a bloody battle of maniacs, The Sheik digs a pencil into Fred Blassie's scalp.



Despite the dissolution of their tag team, Dusty Rhodes and Dick Murdoch remained very close friends. Huge phone bills and multi-paged letters attest to the warmth and depth of this relationship. Thus, when a bloody score had to be settled, no one was surprised when The Outlaws were re-united!

Dusty Rhodes & Dick Murdoch: **THE OUTLAWS RIDE AGAIN**

ICE CUBES MELTED in the clear liquid. A softball thudded into a glove, a child laughed, steaks sizzled, coleslaw mashed, salad tossed, sun beat down upon the friends gathered in Dusty Rhodes' backyard.

While good friends clinked glasses and munched on potato chips, Dusty and Outlaws' partner, good friend, indeed, brother, Dick Murdoch, stood off to the side, expressions grim.

"Well, buddy, here's to the success of the individual dudes," said Dusty, forcing a grin that came out as a grimace.

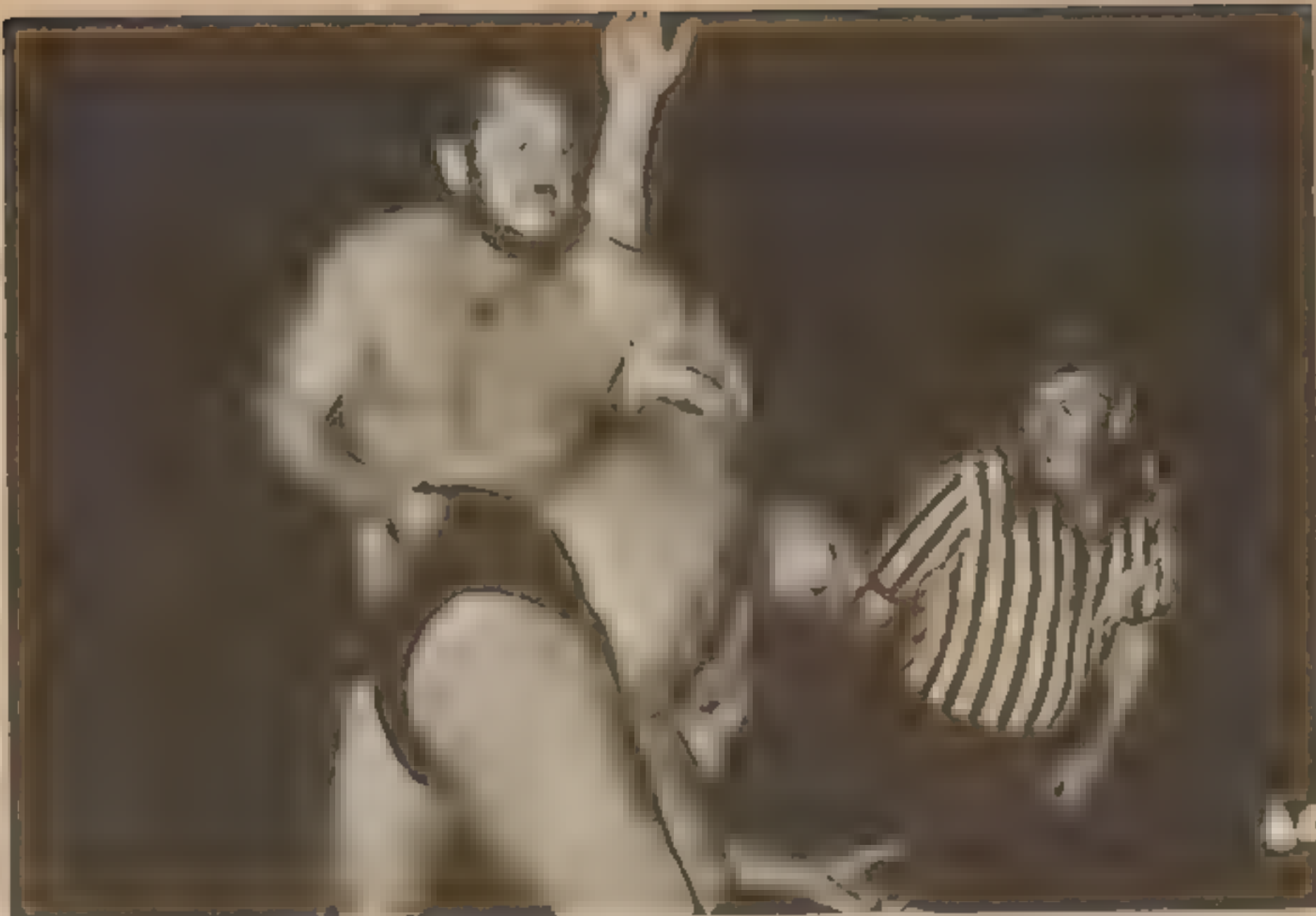
"Yup, Dusty'll take one title, Dick'll take the other, together we'll own the damn sport," said Murdoch, forcing a smile.

They toasted the end of their tag team, The Outlaws. Together, they ran roughshod over all competition, gaining a reputation for brawling unmatched since the days of Sgt. Fury and his Howling Commandos.

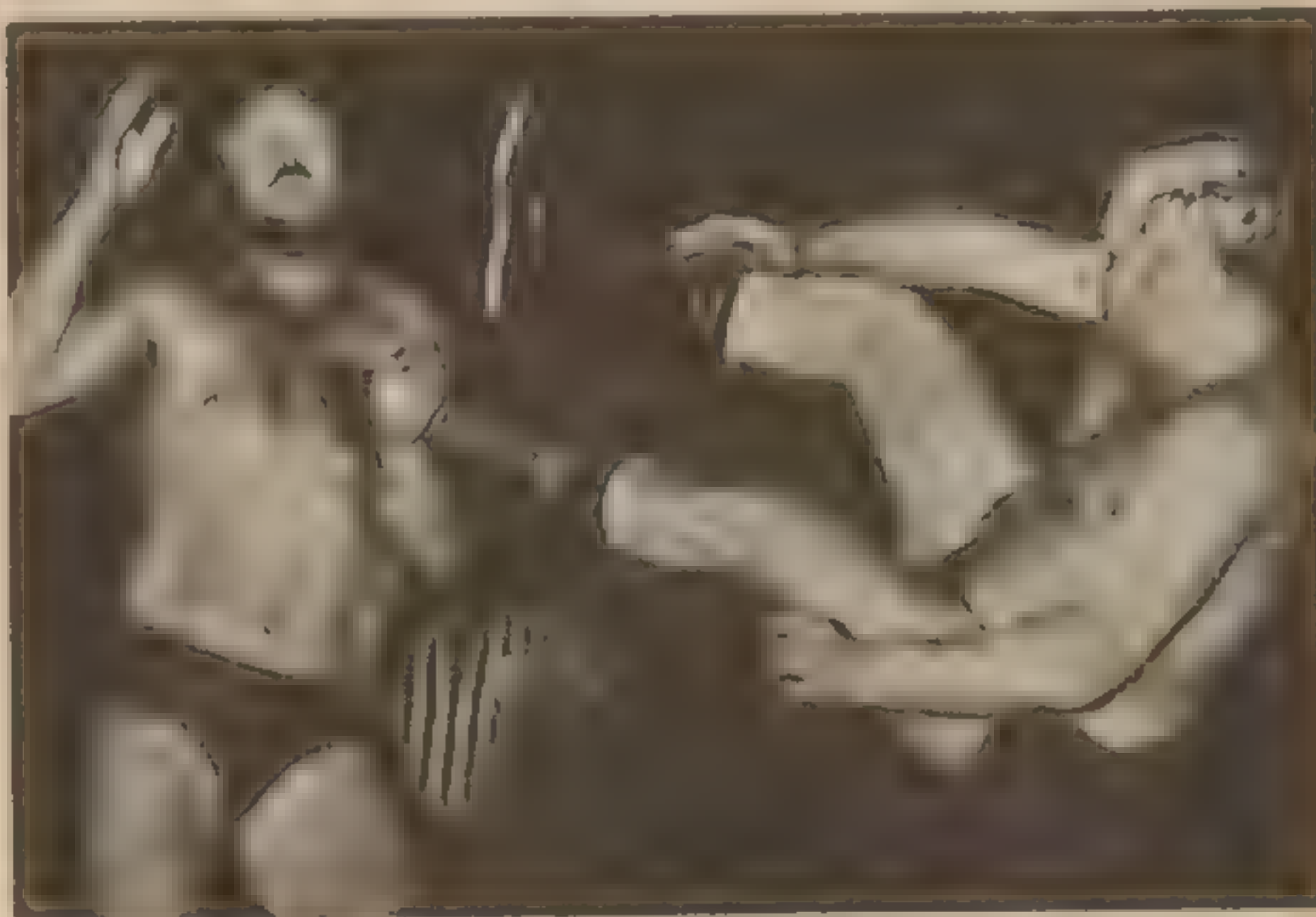
"Ah, we beat up a bunch, huh, buddy?" asked Dusty, sipping his cool drink.

"More than a few, as I recall," said Dick. "Kinda lost track





The Outlaws—Dusty Rhodes and Dick Murdoch (left)—reunited to do battle with the Funks. Dory Jr. traps Murdoch in an abdominal stretch (above), but Dick is able to maneuver out of the hold and stun Funk with a dropkick (below).



along the way."

"How many people you think we knocked out?"

"Few dozen."

"That all?" Dusty questioned

"Maybe a little more. After a while, who had time to count?"

"Always had time to count the money," said Rhodes.

Despite the glory, the friendship, the love, The Outlaws disbanded. Both wanted the challenge of individual competition. Though success against the likes of Bobo Brazil and Wahoo McDaniel earned them grudging admiration,

Rhodes and Murdoch saw other horizons to challenge

In the ensuing years, they kept in touch, offered advice to each other, encouragement, support. If Dusty won a title, Dick won the title. Just like that

"First phone call I got after winning the NWA title from Race was from Dick," said Rhodes

A friendly rivalry developed, though someone twisted the competition into an ugly lie

"Right after Dick won the Missouri title, couple of people came up to me, one of 'em was a



As expected, the match was a brawl from start to finish with almost as much action outside the ring as in. Though both teams were disqualified, there was little doubt in the minds of either team which had earned the moral victory

writer, and asked how I felt about Dick winning that belt," recounted Rhodes. "Told 'em I was damn happy with my friend winning a big championship like that

"Didn't believe me, kept poking and probing to see my *real* reaction. Course, my real reaction was that they wanted to believe and think, that I was jealous. That happened all the time," said Rhodes

"Same thing happened to me when Dusty whipped Race," said Murdoch. "Bunch of people wanted to know how hurt I was. Couldn't understand what the hell they were talking about. All these years, me and Dusty had a friendly sort of competition. If one of us would lose and be feeling kinda low, we'd call and rank their butt, make the other realize how stupid it was feeling sorry for yourself

"But jealous?" Murdoch shrugged. "Why would I ever be jealous of my friend?"

Mutual hatred for the Funks



forged a new bond between Murdoch and Rhodes

"Can't wait to smash Funk's face for what he did to Dusty last year," growled Murdoch

"Figured best way to wipe out the cowards once and for all is this kinda match, no-holds-barred, wipe the floor with their foul faces," shouted Rhodes

The Outlaws showed no signs of losing the coordination that made them a great team. But they had no patent on revenge

"Dumbo and Dumpy," mocked Terry Funk. "Can't wait to bounce fatso and stupid the hell outta the ring."

Punches, kicks and sheer mayhem reigned supreme. At the end, there were no surprises. A double disqualification was declared. Still, there was no question which team dished out more punishment

"Man, that was fun," chuckled Murdoch.

"Gotta do that again real soon," laughed Rhodes, draping his arm around his friend's shoulder. The Funk brothers were not as happy. They had an appointment with the arena doctor. □



IS MARK LEWIN A SLAVE TO GARY HART?

The unholy alliance between Mark Lewin and his manager Gary Hart, has choked Texas wrestling for months. But do fans know that when they jeer Lewin, they may be attacking an innocent man? In one of the most shocking stories in recent years, we reveal how Mark Lewin has no control over his own destiny



THE MUFFLED SOUNDS of the cheering crowd could be heard in the dressing room. Mark Lewin was about to wrestle Bruiser Brodie. A friend of Lewin's remained in the dressing room, sitting in a folding chair and staring into space.

"There's no life behind his eyes," the friend murmured. "You look into Mark's eyes and there's nothing there. He's empty. Gary Hart stole the spirit of the man."

"You're a reporter. Tell the world. This has to stop. Mark is a fine man, a wonderful friend. You know, I almost said 'was.' Hart has him under some sort of hypnosis. Mark is Lewin's slave! It's up to you. Tell the world!"

"I know it sounds crazy ridiculous. But look in the man's eyes! Mark isn't there! Hart has him under a spell!"

We directed the man to the nearest bar, assuming his imagination needed to be deadened. He realized no one believed him. He was going to argue, then gave up. He walked to the arena exit.

Before going through the door, he turned and instructed, "Look for yourself. Look for yourself and then tell me I'm crazy. Look, Mark is a pal of mine. I hope I am crazy. But I swear on all that's holy, there's nothing behind his eyes!"

We made our way into the arena. Brodie and Lewin are engaged in a ferocious battle. As Lewin's manager, Gary Hart was shouting encouragement from the ring apron. Every so often, when the referee couldn't catch him, Hart would smash Brodie as hard as possible. Though there was pain, Brodie didn't let the assault bother him. When a wrestler battles Lewin, he has to expect Hart cheap shots. A professional knows enough to ignore Hart and concentrate on the match.



Lewin often seems on the verge of turning on Gary Hart, yet Hart somehow snaps him back into control just in time.



Hart avoids attack by placing Lewin in a trance (above and right). The time may soon come, however, when Hart will be unaware of Lewin's attack and not have the opportunity to use hypnosis to control his wrestler.

Watching Lewin, there was no impression of him being under some kind of mind control. True, he was a little less limber than usual, perhaps he could even be described as mechanical, but certainly he wasn't mindless. He was making the right moves and the smart moves. Sure, he was cheating, but Lewin never had to be hypnotized to do that.

It was hard to concentrate on possible mind control as the match got wilder. These two veteran warriors tore at each other with an experienced ferocity. The crowd was cheering wildly, hoping to give Brodie a little extra strength

with their cries. Brodie, with an athlete's instincts to respond to the crowd, took the advantage Lewin barely escaped being pinned time and time again.

Hart could stand no more. Brandishing a chair, he leaped into the ring and smashed it across Brodie's back. Hart didn't care that the referee saw him or that Lewin was immediately disqualified.

Lewin cared. In fact, Mark was enraged. Consumed by fury, he rushed at his manager and knocked Hart down. Mark seemed ready to break every bone in Hart's body. Then it happened.

Hart placed his hand on

Lewin's face. Then Hart said something; impossible to hear just what over the crowd's roar. Lewin started to relax, resembling a balloon that was slowly losing air. The crowd fell into a shocked silence. Their expressions all said the same thing: if we didn't see it, no one could make us believe it.

Hart stood up and left the ring. Lewin followed three paces behind. As he passed us, we looked into his eyes. There was nothing there.

The dressing room door was locked. Looking and listening through the keyhole, one could see Lewin sitting motionlessly on the training table. Hart, his back to the door, was whispering and gesturing. His exact motions were impossible to see, though his right arm went up and down as if he was pumping something.

The pair didn't leave the arena for another hour. Then, they refused to talk to the press. Actually, Hart refused and Lewin just kept talking. If we didn't know better, we'd say Lewin was scared. Maybe we don't know better.



When asked if Lewin could be under some kind of spell, Bruiser Brodie replied, "That would explain it. He's been slightly stiffer lately. At times, almost clumsy. Hell, it's hard to believe he's hypnotized or anything like that. But that would explain it." □



LOU ALBANO: MORE SAVAGE THAN THE SAMOANS

Even considering such a thought horrifies all the wrestling world. All fans believed The Samoans were the jungle savages and Captain Lou Albano merely brought them out of the dark recesses of Samoa. Not so. Apparently Lou Albano is as savage as Afa and Sika. If

CAPTAIN LOU ALBANO placed the eight-ounce glass on the square red tablecloth. He wiped his lower lip and bowed theatrically.

"Few men have the courage, the guts, the intestinal fortitude of the Captain," said the bearded man

"That's what separates the Captain from mere mortals, what puts him above everyone else and makes everyone afraid

"I've never done this before. Seems easy enough, little ketchup, salt, the whole bit. All right, I'm ready, my assistants, please." In

walked The Samoans, heads tilted, tongues jutting, eyes bulging

"First a little ketchup, ah, isn't that nice." Albano poured sticky red globs onto the side of the glass. "Now a little salt." Afa handed him a shaker. "And some pepper, please." Sika gave Albano



Left: Lou Albano tells Afa, "let me show you how it's done." Below left: Albano rips at Rene Goulet's neck. Opposite right: The Captain chokes Goulet from the ring apron.



a black container. The Captain doused the glass with pepper. Afa and Sika applauded. Albano grabbed the glass and chewed.

With Afa and Sika applauding, Albano digested the entire glass.

"Just a little example of my amazing powers," Albano said. "The way I can shock and stun and control an entire room." Afa and Sika continued applauding.

"If anyone doubts I am tougher, more savage, meaner, angrier, rougher, stronger, bigger, smarter, than the whole world, let them eat the glass, with or without ketchup," shouted Albano.

Another peculiar example of Albano's peculiar skills. In many respects, Lou Albano is the so-called "macho man." Proud of his courage and toughness, Albano goes out of his way to prove those traits.

"Life is a game of psyching your opponent," said Albano. "You gotta show how tough you are. That's what I'm showing the Samoans."

Yes, according to Albano, Afa and Sika are not mean enough. Not savage enough. Not cruel enough.

"I'm gonna show them what it means to hurt a man," said Albano. "I want them to pull out eyeballs, rip apart noses, mutilate ears, break legs, smash faces, hurt, hurt, hurt until they don't move. Only the Captain knows how to hurt. I wrote the book on courage. Everyone knows that."

Against Rene Goulet and Mike Masters, Albano teamed with one of the Samoans. Albano claimed it was necessary to instill more ferocity in the team.

"I'm so ferocious. I didn't even know which Samoan I was wrestling with," said Albano. "I got so wrapped up, so involved, tense, excited, tough, smoking,



what have you, that I'm aware of only one thing.

"Destroy the opponent. Mutilate, kill, smash, hurt, whatever. I tried to show Samoan #2, whatever his name may be, how to do that."

First Samoan #2 tried to bite off Masters' nose. That failed, for which Albano strongly chastised his partner.

"I told him boys fail, men succeed," said Albano. "Since the

language is a barrier, I had to show him what I was talking about."

Albano kned Goulet, then jabbed two fingers into his ear.

"Deafen, blind, maim them," chortled Albano. "That's the name of the game. Destroy, obliterate, ruin, cripple, only the Captain knows how to do that, only the Captain has what it takes in here," he slapped his stomach. "Guts, no fear, no morals, no scruples, only

one objective and one objective only: winning."

Albano's savagery goes beyond mere physical brutality. His viciousness operates on a subtle emotional level. Despite the Samoans' innate primitive state, they were unaware of the cruel ways of modern man.

Albano is showing them how civilized people can destroy one another. And doing an excellent job. □



WHEN HULK HOGAN arrived in New York, manager Fred Blassie introduced him to a discreet little invention in Blassie's apartment.

"Look here, Hulk, heh-heh," cackled Blassie. "See this little switch," Blassie flicked a black switch under the brown coffee table. A light flickered atop the phone. "I tape all my calls. For posterity. Someday there'll be a Fred Blassie Memorial Library. Millions of fans would want to hear my every word. Maybe there'll be a museum with my picture and busts of me."

Obedient as ever, Hogan switched on the taping mechanism any time he was in Blassie's apartment alone with a ringing phone. When Hogan found his own place in the WWF region, he had a similar mechanism installed.

Now, one of those tapes may destroy Bob Backlund's career.

"I got the goods on that geek," snapped Hogan, borrowing one of his mentor's favorite phrases. "I got his sniveling little whining cries all down on tape. Ain't no way he can deny this." Hogan pointed at the black cassette. Chuckling, then laughing, quieting himself,

Hulk Hogan's Shocking Claim:

"BOB BACKLUND BEGGED ME NOT

According to Hulk Hogan, WWF champion Bob Backlund is a sniveling, whining coward who pleads for mercy at Hogan's huge feet. If this were another idle boast, it would be ignored. But this time, Hogan has proof to back up his shocking claim

turning evilly somber, Hogan turned on the machine, leaned back, arms folded across chest, eyes intent, expectant on the inanimate box.

"Yeah?" Hogan's gruff voice popped over the tape.

"Hogan... Mr. ... Hogan?" a thin voice screeched. "This is Bobby Backlund."

"What the hell you want at this hour?"

"Uh, well, please, Mr. Hogan . . . want to tell . . . ask you . . . not . . . to hurt . . . me again, understand?"

"You sniveling little wimp," roared Hogan. "I'll break you in half just to show the world what a gutless little wimp the champion of the world can be."

"Sorry you feel that way . . . please don't . . . hurt me . . . Mr. . . . Hogan."

Hulk cackled fiendishly, turned off the tape, bolted up, paced, pointed, laughed, scowled.

"See that? Guy's cryin', afraid of his own shadow. No one woulda believed me when I say Bob Backlund begged me not to hurt him. But I got the proof, all the proof you'd ever need."

The tape ran again. And again. One more time. Indisputable proof that Bob Backlund called Hogan, begging for mercy. However, that uncharacteristic whining led to suspicions.



TO HURT HIM!"

"Course, you wouldn't think Howdy Doody would be like that, would you?" asked Blassie. "Course not, 'cause you geeks print only nice things about Howdy Doody and that pig manager Skoaland and lasagna-leg Sammartino."

"Anytime we say something you don't want to hear, you call

us liars. Here's the goods, can't argue around them, can't say anything else, we have the tapes, the proof, pencil-necked geek, heh-heh, print that, print the truth, for once."

A call to Backlund produced this response.

"They have a tape saying what?" howled Backlund. "He's

a liar. The tape is a phony." We had sound experts at a New York recording studio listen to the tape. They said the voice on the tape was Backlund's. But they also said there were many uncharacteristic pauses and changes in pitch in the voice.

"Apparently," decided the chief engineer, "what they did



There are many wrestlers who are afraid of Hulk Hogan. And for good reason. But could Bob Backlund be among them? Hogan says he has proof that he is



was tape all of Backlund's TV interviews. Then they got a sound man to splice together the words they wanted

"For instance, if on TV Backlund said, 'Please don't try and stop me. I'm going to hurt Mr. Hogan,' they could have doctored the tape so it comes out, 'Mr. Hogan . . . please don't hurt me.' It's obviously a scheme to try and discredit Backlund

Apparently Blassie or Hogan, or both, doctored the tape. When we informed Blassie of the results of our investigation, his reaction was not unexpected.

"Typical pencil-necked geek garbage. The champ crawls on his belly and you blame us. Well, I'm not talking anymore. When Hogan destroys Backlund, that'll shut everyone's mouth once and for all," said Blassie. □

Harley Race vs. Tony Atlas:

What happened prior to the NWA title match between Harley Race and Tony Atlas that forced the alliance officials into their amazing stance. They wanted to recognize the bout. They were all set to do so. Until the stunning realization rammed into the President's office.

And they had no choice

THE THREE MEMBER NWA commission opened the hearing only to the press and interested parties. Testimony had been heard in earlier, secret meetings with attorneys and wrestling officials

Seated in the front row was Tony Atlas, nattily attired in a gray, pin-striped suit. Across the aisle sat champion Harley Race, an open-necked peach-colored shirt tucked inside a powder blue pair of slacks and navy sport jacket. The hearing was called to decide whether a recent Race-Atlas match had been a title bout. That match ended in a draw. If the bout was ruled "sanctioned," Atlas would be entitled to a rematch, in accordance with the NWA bylaws

"We have reached a decision," said Franklin L. Gossage, senior member of this

distinguished panel. "In a recent title match between champion Harley Race and Tony Atlas, a clause, inserted at the champion's request, came under a great deal of criticism

"As is our job, we convened to consider this proposal. For the benefit of all parties, we will read the clause in question: 'A champion has the exclusive right to turn down the selection of any referee who, in his opinion, is incapable of fairly refereeing the championship bout.'

"Since Mr. Race asked for this insertion at the last minute, we were unable to rule upon it before the bout. However, we have films of the bout between

Atlas uses his incredible strength to press NWA champion Harley Race above his head. Whether or not this match should be sanctioned is in question.



THE TITLE MATCH THE NWA REFUSED TO SANCTION



Harley Race is wide open for two powerful rights by Tony Atlas (above left and right). Race has difficulty breaking Atlas' hammerlock, as Lou Thesz presides (left).



Mr. Race and Mr. Atlas. In our judgement, the only way to fairly rule is to review the films and decide whether referee Lou Thesz acted prejudicially against Mr. Race."

Lights dimmed as a screen slid from the ceiling, behind the commission.

On the film, Race grabbed Atlas around the waist and flung him to the ground. As the champion started a kneedrop, Atlas spun away. Suddenly Thesz seized Race's elbow and said something.

"What did Mr. Thesz say, Mr. Race?" asked Gossage.

"Said I better watch myself," replied Race. "Said I was

cheating and I'd just better watch myself."

The commission members nodded and resumed the running of the film.

Atlas put Race into a powerful armlock. At one point, Atlas' arm slipped over Race's throat, unintentionally choking him. Despite Race's spastic movements, Thesz appeared to take his time breaking the hold.

"I didn't mean to choke Harley," said Atlas. "If someone had said somethin' to me, I woulda stopped. All I wanted to do is win, that's all. I ain't never cheated in my whole life."

"That bum would've let me die if he could've gotten away with

it," snarled Race. "Everyone knows Thesz favors scientific wrestlers. You watch this match and see how he interfered with all my maneuvers and how he tried to help Atlas."

"Not so," shouted Atlas, standing. "Mr. Thesz is a fine referee, a great man."

"Sure, kid, 'cause he helped you."

"That's a lie," Atlas had to be restrained

"Gentlemen, gentlemen," Gossage rapped his gavel. "We have had more than our share of arguments. Confine fighting to the ring, where it belongs, and allow rational heads to prevail. I believe this commission has seen and heard more than enough to reach it's conclusion on whether this match, ending in a draw, should have been sanctioned, and now . . ."

"Now you haven't," a voice whipped from the rear of the room, silencing the small group and pulling faces toward the powerful figure standing before the door. "My name is Lou Thesz," he said. The six-time world champion walked down the aisle. "I think you should hear me out. I'll be brief

"I've spent my life as a fair man, whether I'm a wrestler or referee," said Thesz. "I've never shown favoritism toward anyone, no matter how much I respect or dislike them," his dark eyes fell upon Race's cringing face

"This match between Race and Atlas was fair and good. Anyone who tries to say otherwise is a bare-faced liar," his words hissed across the room. "Thank you for your time." Thesz shuffled down the aisle, all eyes upon his sturdy, proud back. Gossage sighed, rubbed his chin, banged his gavel.

"This match is sanctioned," he said. □



Atlas applies a sleeper hold and Race is about to conk out on the job. Somehow, Harley found the strength to inch toward the ropes where Thesz made Atlas break the hold.



THE NETWORK BEGAN. SOS's raced across the country. Through phone calls, letters, and telegrams, Blackjack Mulligan contacted his friends. Over and over, the message was the same

To a top Texas wrestler, Mulligan wrote: "We must stop the Masked Superstars. I need your help. Please get back to me as soon as possible." His reply?

"Never heard from the dude,"

ONLY ANDRE HAS THE GUTS TO TEAM UP

Mulligan said, shaking his head.

To a premier WWF wrestler, Mulligan wired this telegram: "MID-ATLANTIC AREA IN TROUBLE. STOP. NEED YOUR AID. STOP. COME DOWN TO FORM TAG TEAM STOP. RESPOND AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. STOP."

"When I called the guy several days later, he said he never got the telegram. Think I could believe that?" Mulligan said, his voice dipping to a sad whisper.

To a leading Florida grappler, Mulligan said over the phone. "You gotta help me out. These maniacs are ruining the Mid-Atlantic area, something's gotta be done or we're in a lotta trouble." And the answer?

A big star like Andre the Giant could look aside when small people are troubled. But Andre is not your typical big star. He signs autographs, talks to fans, treats friends and foes with courtesy. And when Blackjack Mulligan needed help, Andre rushed to his side



Andre greets the onrushing Masked Superstar #2 with a boot to the face (above left). Blackjack Mulligan dazes Superstar #1 with a right (above right). Andre wipes Superstar #1 across the ring (below).

WITH BLACKJACK MULLIGAN





Though Blackjack was unsuccessful in his attempt to unmask Superstar #1, he and Andre were extremely successful throughout the match.

said Andre, hands on hip, dark eyes sweeping the room. "Everyone is your friend when you're on top and they can jump on your bandwagon, right? But if you're ever in trouble, hah, then they don't know who you are."

Andre pawed at the ground, twisting a piece of paper between his huge hands.

"What good is a friend if you can't rely on him when in trouble? I consider myself Blackjack's friend. When I'm a friend, I am there for life. If my friend's in trouble," I am in trouble. If my friend is attacked, I'm attacked," said Andre, hands fisting.

"I hate people who are your friend only when you do not need anything. I do not want to mention names, but many wrestlers who walk around saying what good friends they are to Blackjack, well, they are not his good friend when he needs them, are they?"

"I would never desert my friend. Ever. I do not care what the danger, who the opponent, the circumstances, whatever. All I need to hear is my friend has a problem and I come running," Andre said, throwing aside the crumpled paper.

"It does not matter that it is the Masked Superstars. I have no particular fondness for them. But if Blackjack said his car broke down, he needed money; he needed a place to live, whatever the problem, his troubles are my troubles. That is all."

"I tell you, I will remember those who turned their back on Blackjack. He is willing to forgive. He wouldn't even tell me their names. But I know who they are and what they did," Andre said, looking at Mulligan, silent throughout the tirade. "Come on, partner," Andre said with a smile. "Let's get those bums." □

THE EYES OF every spectator glistened with panic

"Stop it!" someone yelled, and others agreed loudly.

Samuel Patton, host of this apartment wrestling match, the man who had the responsibility to stop the match, didn't move from his chair. He watched expressionlessly as Gayla squeezed powerful arms around Vesta's head and wrapped exquisite legs around Vesta's belly. The beautifully built brunette in the revealing one-piece bathing suit was enveloped in agony. Everyone in the room wanted to see her spared further pain. Everyone but Samuel Patton, her grandfather.

There was another person who didn't want the match stopped. Vesta, every muscle in her body aching, every nerve tingling with pain, struggled to escape and refused to surrender. As long as she could remain conscious, she would battle. Her grandfather could never see her quit.

Vesta's ordeal began two months ago. Samuel Patton, board chairman of a major conglomerate, announced his retirement. The original company had been in the family for three generations. Vesta was next in line for the company's presidency. If her name was Victor, the position would have been hers for the asking. Being a

woman, Vesta "didn't have a snowball's chance in hell," in her grandfather's words.

"Perhaps if my daughter hadn't been a fool," Patton avered, "and married that worthless scoundrel, your father, I might overlook the fact you're a woman. But the offspring of idiots must also be an idiot. Your mother made a bad marriage and then stayed in it. She was a quitter. Your father was given every advantage I could give him. To reward me, he embezzled \$25,000 and made off for Toronto, Toronto! He was worth millions and embezzled only \$25,000 after two years work

"As you know, I wanted to see

THE APARTMENT WRESTLING MATCH DEMANDED BE STOPPED

Rarely in the history of apartment wrestling has a match provoked such universal condemnation. Two girls who went too far. The patrons shouted for the bout to end before it was too late. Yet one man demanded it continue. He had a vested interest in the outcome

THEY

Above left: Vesta's lush body is taut with savagery as she digs her knee into Gayla's back and her fingers into her victim's scalp. Above: Vesta's beautiful face is a mask of pain and exhaustion as she makes a valiant attempt to hurl Gayla to the carpet. Below: There is no pity or mercy for Vesta as Gayla's experienced cruelty torments the young beauty. Gayla's body is a weapon as she tortures her foe's every muscle and limb. The crowd cries for the bout to be ended, but the two beauties and the battle's host insist it continue.



Vesta is a wildcat as she digs her nails into Gayla's face. So intent on punishing her foe, Vesta doesn't feel Gayla's grasp on her hair until too late. An instant later, Gayla would be spun around and into the wall.

your father behind bars. Your mother, my daughter, the idiot, begged me to drop charges. I got the money back, though, and made sure your father never controlled so much as a dime again. I begged my daughter to leave the bum, but she insisted on staying married. You're stubborn like your mother; stubborn in being afraid to fight for what you want.

"The descendants of crooks and fools shall not run my empire

"You'll be well taken care of. There will be nothing you can't have—except a position in the company. That is final. Why don't you join some charity that needs a pretty woman with the brains of a pretty woman."

Vesta heard this pronouncement in silence. She knew better than to argue with her grandfather. When the tirade was over, though, she had something to say

"My mother is the only person whoever beat you. She wanted my father more than you wanted him kicked out. What eats you up is that my mother had a stronger will than you. She didn't surrender; she triumphed. Over you! And I am my mother's daughter. I'll triumph over you, also."

With that, Vesta turned and headed for the door. Her grandfather shouted after her, "Don't dare cross me! Don't even consider it!"

Vesta knew exactly what to do. Vesta was the only one in the family who knew of her grandfather's love for apartment wrestling. His Manhattan penthouse has hosted some of the best matches in the spectacle's history. Some rich men spend fortunes to own the finest race horses. Samuel Patton longed to control the destiny of apartment wrestling's most accomplished battler

His latest hope was in the



The difference between the two warriors is apparent. When Gayla has the advantage (above left) she is the cool professional going for the kill. When Vesta has the advantage (above right), she's wild and reckless.

savage brawler, Gayla. Though not the most beautiful woman around, there was an intensity about her that spoke of magnificence. Patton intended to be her patron; give her everything in return for people linking their names. All she would need was a few more victories to prove herself to Patton. None of this was a secret to Vesta. How she discovered this will never be known, unless she does get to control the company and some executive receives a startling promotion. Once she discovered this information, Vesta knew what she had to do.

Gayla's next opponent was

Kani. Patton had spent days choosing her over 25 others. The blonde Kani stands over six-feet tall and weighs about 160 pounds. A powerful woman, she has made many opponents surrender not only the match, but the sport. Patton wanted to see his favorite tested to her limits. He even hired a trainer for Kani to make sure the blonde was at the top of her form.

Vesta paid Kani a visit. It cost Vesta a goodly sum to discover Kani's address, but it was money well spent. So was the money it cost to make sure Kani didn't wrestle that night. Vesta planned to take the grappler's

place.

The trainer no longer visited Kani, but earned Samuel Patton's money by working with Vesta. The granddaughter enjoyed that part of it most of all. When the exercises became too hard, the hours too long, Vesta would think that her grandfather was paying for this workout and get a second or third wind. The energy engendered by hatred can be awesome. It certainly was awesome in Vesta's case.

After two brutal months of training, Vesta faced her first and only test. At her last

Continued on page 58)

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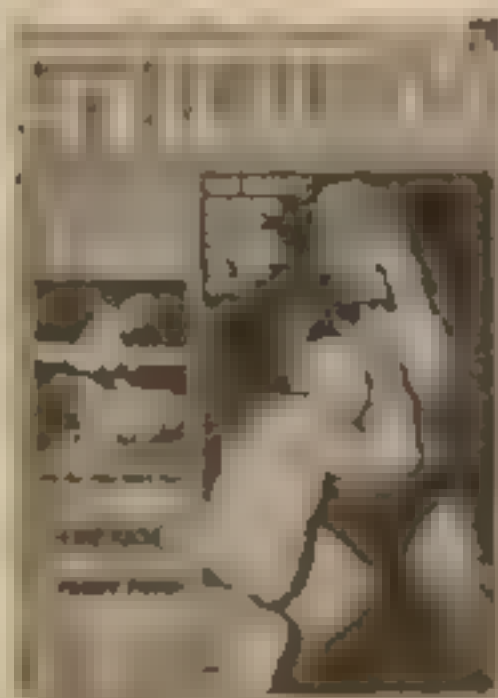


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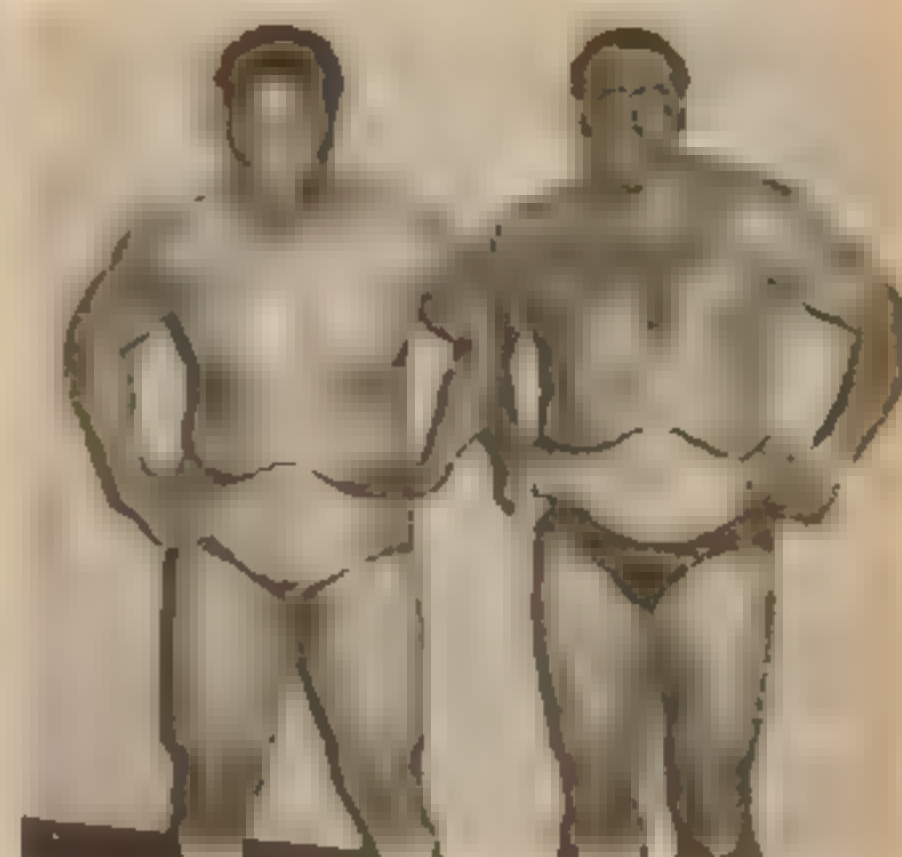
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SCRAPBOOK

(Continued from Page 21)

star Bob Roop in tag team matches . . . Bruiser altered his style and his choice of opponents and his legion of fans steadily grew.

JUNE 1975



Victor Rivera and Dom DeNucci pose briefly with their WWF tag team belts before seeking medical attention

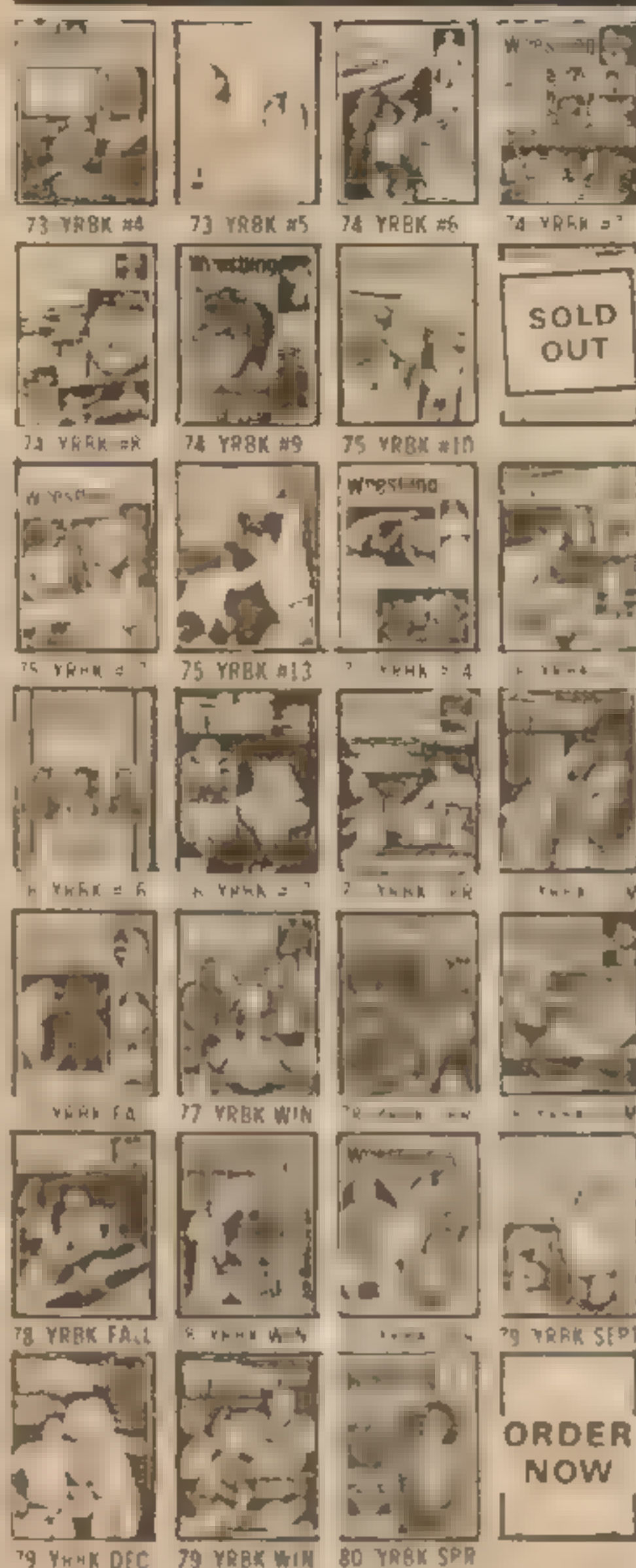
Dominic DeNucci and Victor Rivera won the WWF tag team titles from John and Jimmy Valiant as thousands of shocked fans watched on television . . . Harley Race, the number one contender for Jack Brisco's NWA title, joined with Roger Kirby to win the Florida tag team titles . . . Rumors persisted of a coming split between AWA tag team champions Ray Stevens and Nick Bockwinkel . . . Ivan Putski, upset with Bobby Heenan's constant interference, challenged the manager to a special match in Winnipeg in which Bobby would be declared the winner if Putski could not secure the win in 10 minutes. Heenan's strategy to run away did not work. Putski caught him and beat him to a bloody pulp.

Unfortunately, Putski lost track of time in the match and was declared the loser when 10 minutes passed . . . Dusty Rhodes was disqualified for throwing Blackjack Mulligan over the top rope in a match in Greensboro, North Carolina . . . Jack Brisco applied a Boston crab to retain his NWA title against Prof. Tanaka in Mississippi . . . Waldo Von Erich, under the management of Fred Blassie, defeated Bruno Sammartino on cuts . . . A match between two of the most maniacal wrestlers in history pitted "Crazy" Luke Graham and The Sheik. No one, including the ring announcer, escaped the frenzied action. The Sheik was disqualified for attacking the referee. NWA RATINGS: 1-Jack Brisco; 2-Harley Race; 3-Baba the Giant; 4-Dory Funk Jr.; 5-The Sheik; 6-Paul Jones; 7-Jerry Lawler; 8-Jose Lothario; 9-Pepper Gomez; 10-Terry Funk. WWF RATINGS: 1-Bruno Sammartino; 2-George Steele; 3-Waldo Von Erich; 4-Bobby Duncum; 5-Spiros Arion; 6-Jim Valiant; 7-Ivan Putski; 8-Chief Jay Strongbow; 9-Victor Rivera; 10-DeNucci. AWA RATINGS: 1-Verne Gagne; 2-Billy Robinson; 3-Nick Bockwinkel; 4-Boris Breshnikov; 5-Dusty Rhodes; 6-Ivan Putski; 7-Baron Von Raschke; 8-Horst Hoffman; 9-Greg Gagne; 10-Jim Brunzell. TAG TEAM RATINGS: 1-Dom DeNucci & Victor Rivera; 2-Nick Bockwinkel & Ray Stevens; 3-The Anderson Brothers; 4-The Mongols; 5-The Blackjacks; 6-Harley Race & Roger Kirby; 7-Black Gordman & Goliath; 8-El Gran Markus & The Baron; 9-The Valiant Brothers; 10-Jim Golden & Tojo Yamamoto. ☐

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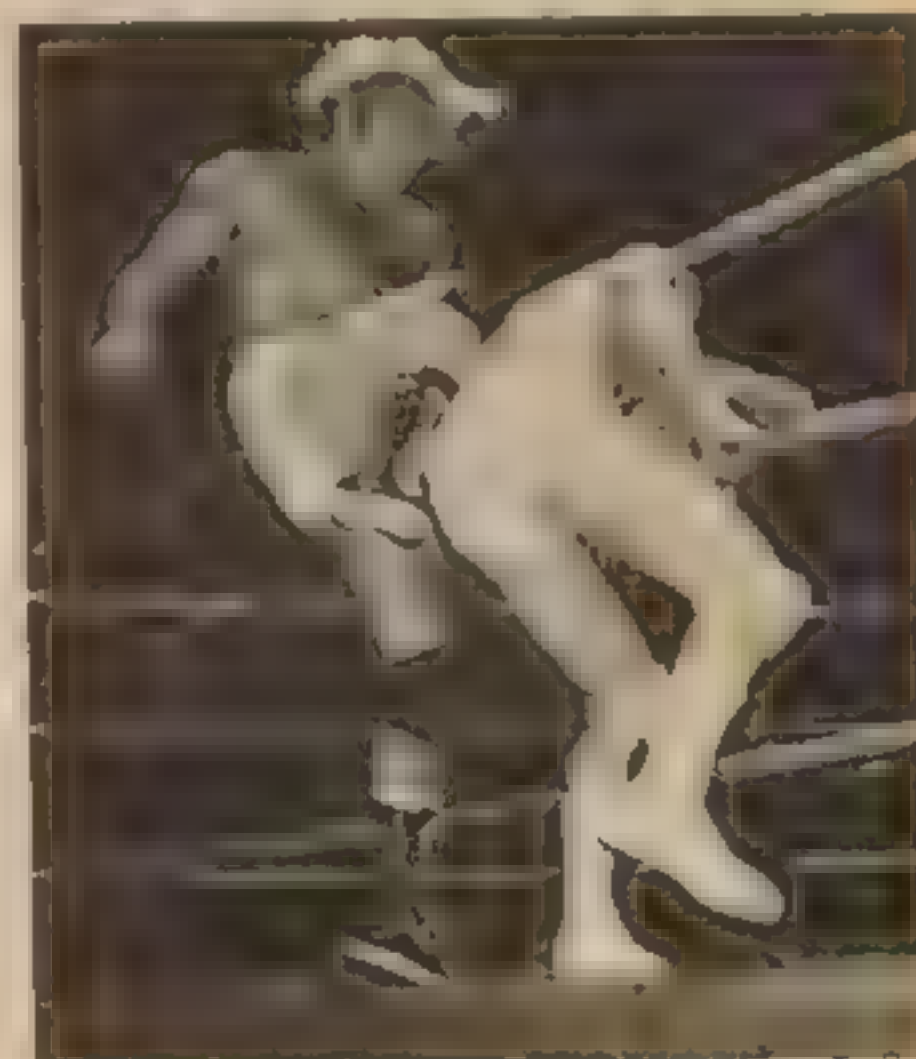
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WE ACCUSE

(Continued from Page 10)



SPORTS REVIEW calls for the elimination of the cowardly practice of champions purposely disqualifying themselves to retain their titles. Harley Race (above) and Nick Bockwinkel (below) are on the verge of doing just that.



they do? Immediately declare the match void and demand a quick rematch? What if the champion does it again? Should there be a limited number of matches in which a champion can get away with this before his title is stripped? And should any league official strip a man of his belt when he has worn it, through doubtful means, in the ring?

No. A man should lose the title in the ring. No matter how experienced a league



Bob Backlund is a battling champion who has never intentionally disqualified himself.

official may be, he does not know the sheer physical experience of wrestling for a title. Neither do the fans. Neither, frankly, do journalists.

Thus a champion who disqualifies himself should be compelled to wrestle that same individual in his very next match. The league should have powers to override any existing contractual obligations. If the champion persists, he should be immediately suspended, the length of time to be decided upon by league officials.

If, upon his return, the champion continues to get himself disqualified, he should be suspended. The league will, by financial and public embarrassment, coerce this so-called champion into acting like a champion.

Fans deserve better, for they are the bedrock of the sport. A title match should pit two men against each other for the glory of a championship. Cowardice should not be the ultimate referee. ☐

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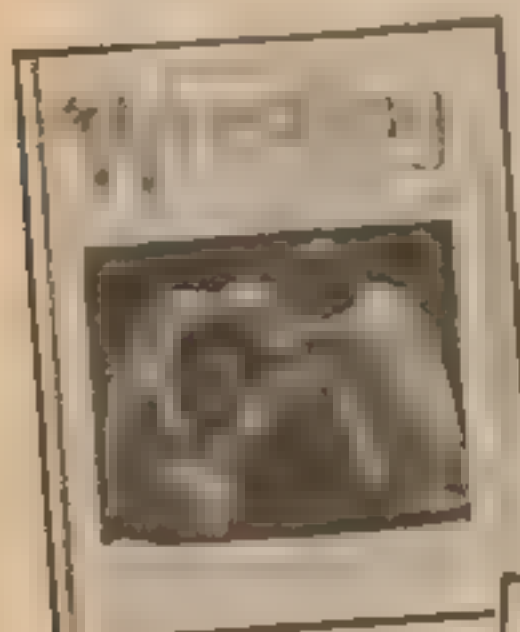
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WRESTLER OF THE MONTH

(Continued from Page 12)

cannot get away with his
cheating and lying.

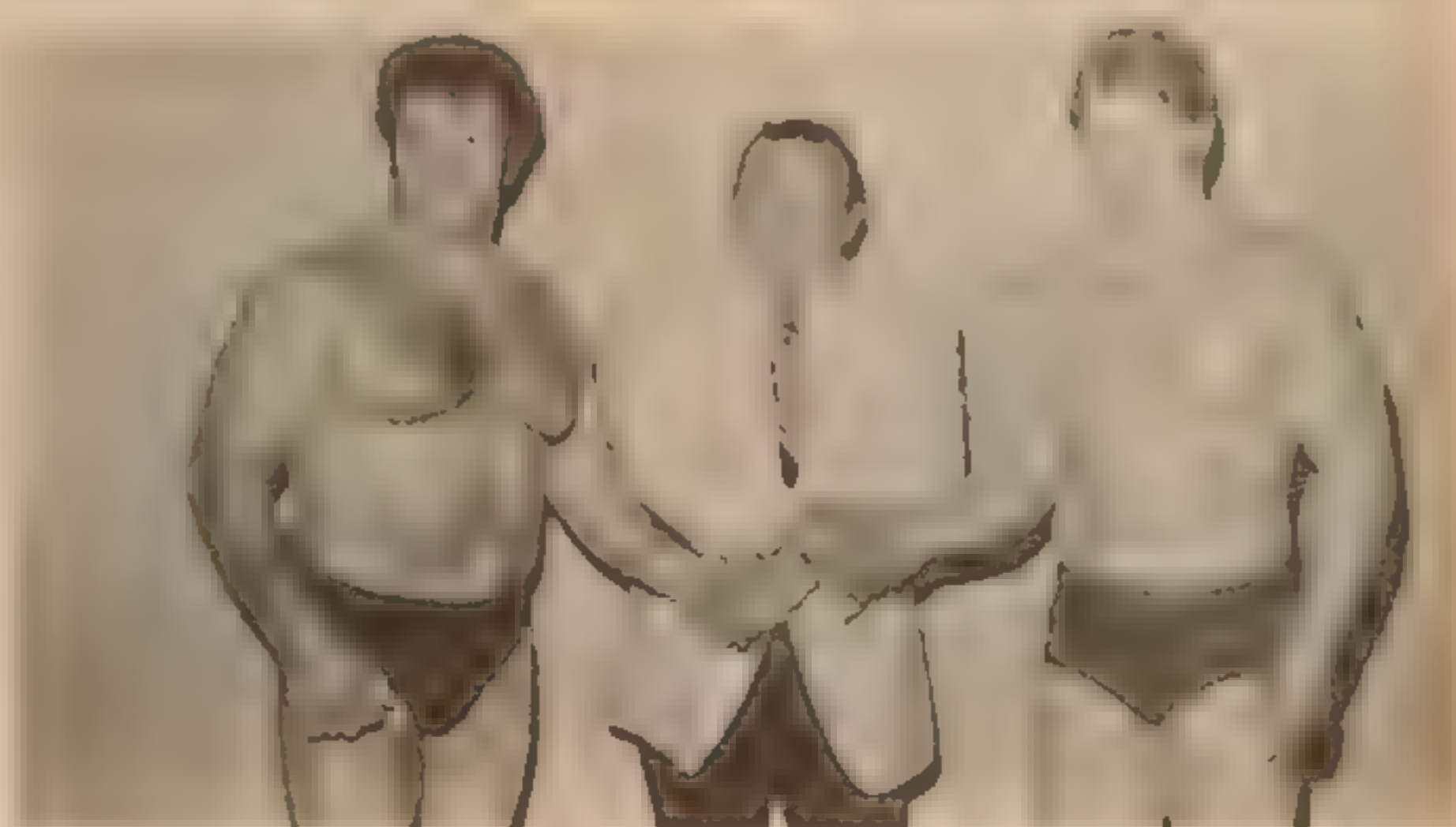
"Yes it hurts me to attack
Larry. I cannot lie and say
somewhere deep I don't hurt a
little when I see this guy I
trained and loved like a brother
Sure, I hurt a little. Who
wouldn't?

More than the Zbyszko feud
contributed to the selection of
Sammartino as this month's top
wrestler. Bruno confronts all
the top WWF rulebreakers. No
one frightens the Living
Legend. He backs off from no
match, no foe, no situation.

"Sometimes the more hostile



Larry Zbyszko works Bruno over in their historic television match (above). Arnold
Skoaland poses with his two champions—Bruno Sammartino and Bob Backlund (below)



"But what could I do? Could I
let that creep get away with his
dirty lies? Could I ever look at
my fans, my loyal, wonderful
fans who have supported me
over the years, if I turned away?

"No. Sometimes a man must
stand up and be counted. I had
to do this, no matter how much
it hurts," Bruno said, shaking
his head.

the situation, the better I like it,"
said Bruno. "Take a creep like
Patera. You know, that guy has
all the natural talent in the
world. Doggone it, he could've
been champion of the world.
But he didn't want it. He wanted
to break the rules and break
legs. What could you do?

"He challenged me. But that
is just a macho sort of thing. The

real reason I couldn't turn away hinges on what Ken Patera represents. Guys who break the rules shouldn't be able to show how successful they are. Crime doesn't pay, you know.

"If youngsters, the ones who spend their allowance and the money they earn mowing lawns or babysitting, if those youngsters see that breaking laws make you a success, they're liable to do the same. What the heck kind of example is that?"

"So beating Patera shows how crime doesn't pay, how a good man respects the law. I have to do this, no matter how dangerous."



Bruno sets to do battle with Larry Zbyszko in what has proved to be the most emotionally draining series of matches he has ever had.

Bruno stood, paced, grimaced, and slumped onto the wooden bench.

"A professional wrestler must take a stand somewhere down the line. You must be willing to fight for what you believe in, no matter the risks to yourself or your very future.

"We all owe something to those people in the stands, the ones who cheer you and shout your name. I want to share this award with them." □

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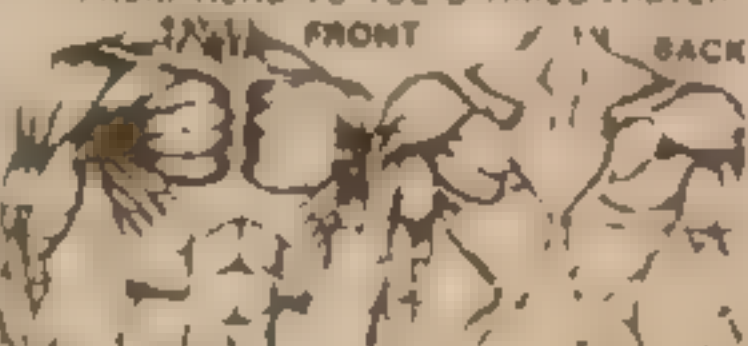
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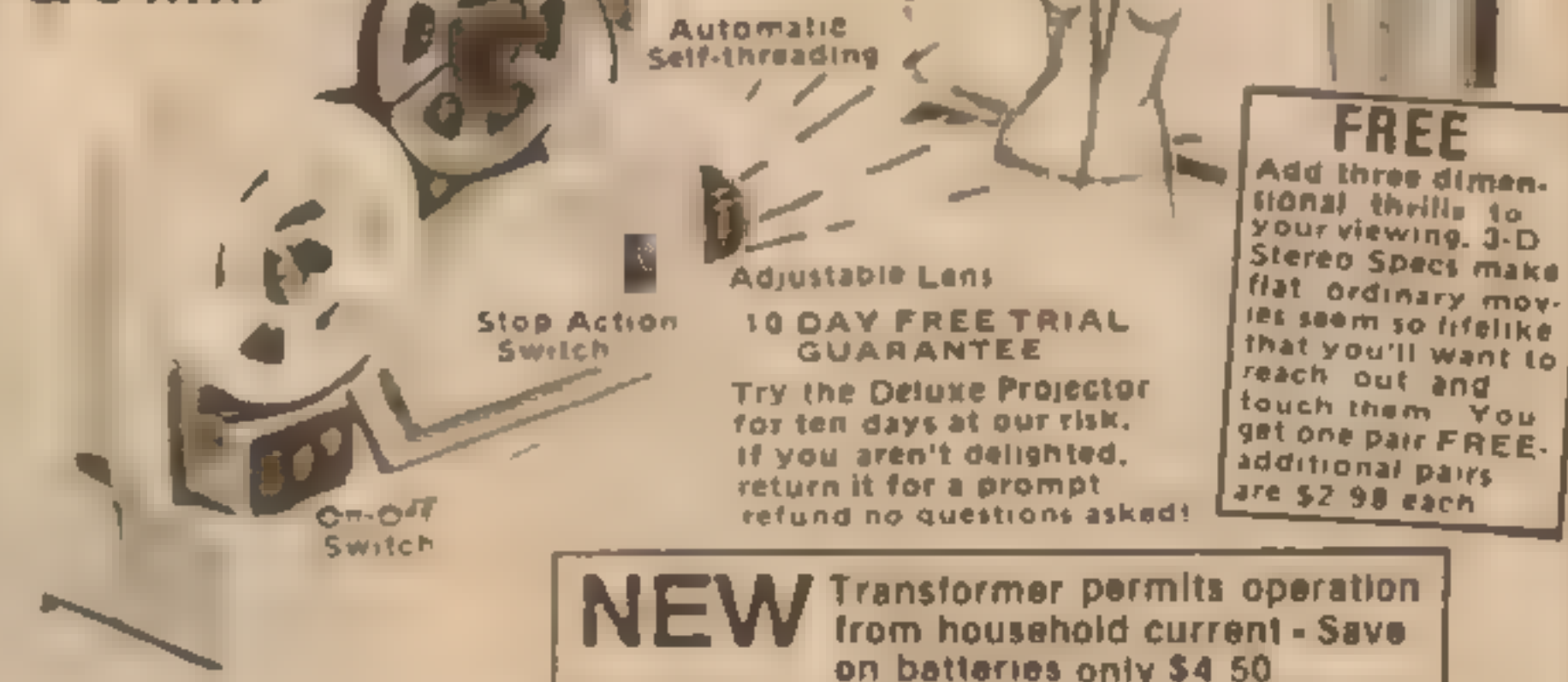
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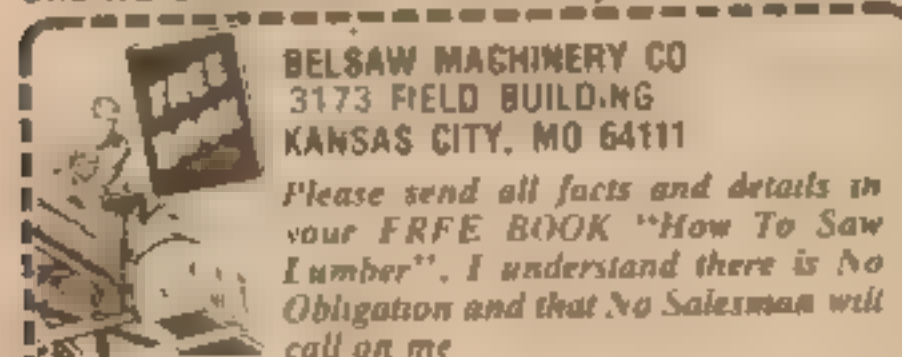


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THE TATTLER

(Continued from Page 8)



VALENTINE VS. YOUNGBLOOD

shows proper respect to my crown.

"In short, I already am the greatest Florida champion in the title's history," concluded Muraco.

—Barry Simon

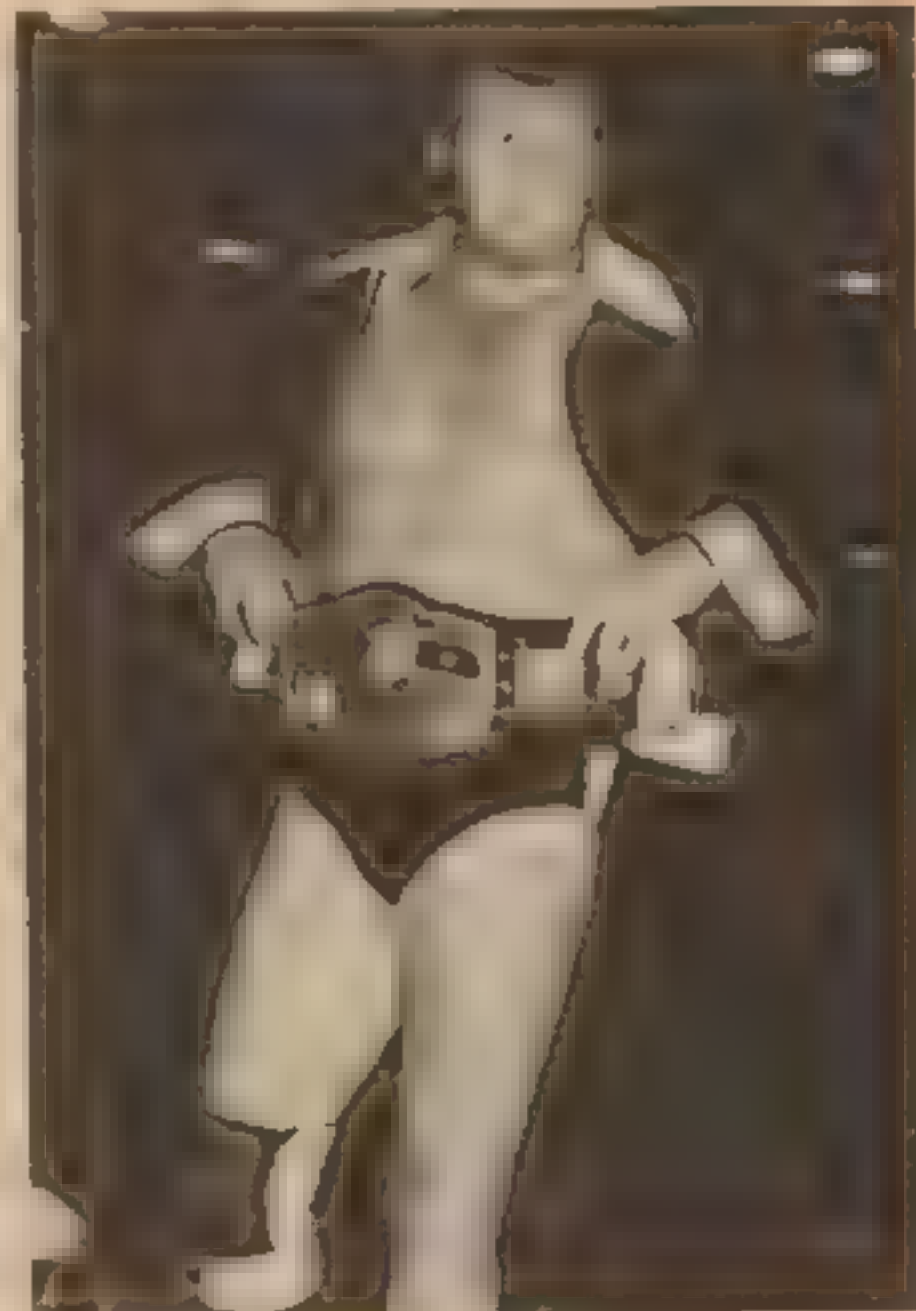
RICHMOND, VA—After months of shooting off their big mouths, Greg Valentine and Ray Stevens achieved the unthinkable: they defeated Jay Youngblood and Rick Steamboat for the NWA title.

Many fans thought Valentine and Stevens were just a pair of big-mouths who couldn't win with their fists. Rick and Jay seemed destined for a long title reign and wrestling immortality.

Yet Valentine and Stevens are champs. No one can take that away. 'It's up to future champions to show this victory was a fluke or the start of a hideous title reign.

—Carl Salinger

TORONTO, CANADA—
"All my life I've wanted to



HARLEY RACE

meet that washed-up slow turkey," snarled Dewey Robertson, Canadian Heavyweight champion. "I've dreamt of nothing else but battering his ugly face all over the ring, then tossing his bloody remains into the eighth row, where I'd laugh as the attendants dumped him on a stretcher and carried the bum off to the hospital."

Indeed. Needless to say, Robertson isn't particularly fond of NWA champion Harley Race.

"I hate him," snapped Robertson.

In a recent match, that hatred, assuredly mutual, generated a brawl bringing honor to neither man.

—Geoffrey York

COLUMBUS, GA—Ring in the bells. Hear ye, hear ye. The new Georgia tag team champs are... Tony Atlas and Kevin Sullivan.

"I don't believe it," giggled Atlas after he and Sullivan dethroned Ivan Koloff and

Alexis Smirnoff.

"Someone pinch me," shrieked Sullivan, waving a towel over his grinning face.

Young, handsome, and decent, this new tag team should restore dignity to the belt dirtied by the fiendish Russians.

—B.W. Foreman

DALLAS, TX—"They are sending those little boys to wrestle us?" asked Mr. Hito, pointing a thick finger into his chest and muffling a smirk. "We will have to start the match early so they can make it home before bedtime." Joined by partner Mr. Sakurada, these twin demons from across the Pacific convulsed with laughter at the prospect of wrestling Kerry and David Von Erich.

What's the old line about the last laugh?

"He who's still standing at the final bell gets to laugh last," said David, grinning. "And I just love to laugh."

—Virginia W. Sloan

NEW YORK, NY—Delicate negotiations are underway between WWF promoters and former federation champion Pedro Morales. Still in the talk stage, preliminary indications suggest Morales may be returning to the WWF.

"I would love to come back to the WWF," said Morales. "Loyal fans write me hundreds of letters every week begging my return. Certain points still must be resolved. Let me simply say we are making progress."

For all of Morales fans, the thought of the former champ returning is an exhilarating one.

—Allison Corey □

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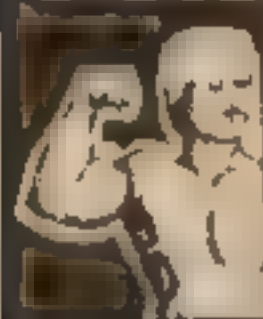
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APARTMENT WRESTLING

(Continued from Page 47)



Gayla is using all her strength to conquer Vesta instantly. The wily veteran allows the inexperienced beauty to exhaust herself. If one could see Gayla's eyes, the killer lust would be apparent.

workout, she asked the trainer, "Can I win?" Came the reply, "You won't embarrass yourself. That's about the best you can hope for in two months."

Vesta chose her uniform carefully. Her voluptuous figure would be best exhibited in an expensive one-piece bathing suit. She knew it made her beautiful and desirable. Men ogling her would infuriate Grandfather. Thinking about it, Vesta smiled for the first and last time that day.

That night, Vesta stood outside the door of her grandfather's penthouse. She was

wearing her bathing suit under a mink coat. She took a deep breath and rang the bell. Chapman, the butler, answered the door. For the first time, Chapman looked surprised.

"I don't believe you're expected," he finally managed to sputter.

"That's true, Chapman. But I'm needed."

"Shall I tell..."

"You don't tell anybody anything! It's my surprise."

Vesta went to the bedroom and waited for the spectators to arrive. When everyone was

(Continued on page 62)



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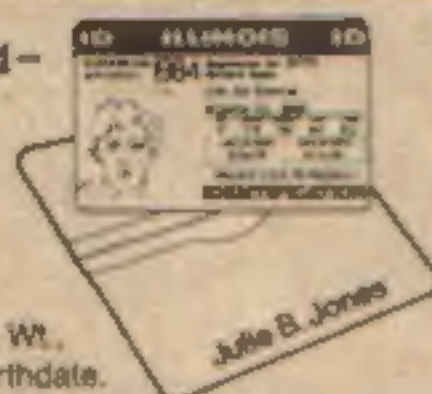
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APARTMENT WRESTLING

(Continued from Page 58)



Vesta struggles like a mad banshee (above), using every ounce of her quickly fading strength. Gayla allows herself to be caught in a scissors lock (below), knowing Vesta can only hurt herself. Gayla laughs wildly as she feels the voluptuous brunette's legs quiver into powerlessness.



seated, Gayla made her entrance.

Then, in walked Vesta. Many of the spectators knew her. A few laughed, assuming it was a joke. Vesta stared defiantly at her grandfather. Samuel Patton returned her gaze expressionlessly.

"Shall we begin?" he asked.

Gayla nodded, not knowing the true identity of her foe. Vesta nodded, also, surprised at finding herself shocked that her grandfather was going to let the bout take place. She realized she expected a scene, not a battle. Did her grandfather realize that, too? Was he daring her to quit?

Damn him! Vesta nodded she was ready to begin.

"Commence."

Gayla took two steps forward and stopped. A snarl spread across her face like a stain. She dared Vesta to approach. Vesta met the challenge. She approached slowly, then rushed her foe. It looked like Gayla would easily sidestep the rush when Vesta leaped in the air. Gayla, who had casually stepped to the side, couldn't escape the voluptuous projectile. Vesta's knees smashed into the stunned beauty's belly.

Instantly, Vesta was atop her opponent. Her arms moved with expert swiftness to encircle Gayla's throat. The notorious grappler started to gag, her bulging eyes revealing fear and astonishment. Vesta's eyes were wild and unfocused. Her intelligence had surrendered to killer instinct.

Apartment wrestlers can't foresake intelligence. Vesta never saw Gayla's arm snake up and grab her hair. With a powerful yank, Gayla snapped Vesta's head back. The pain and surprise caused Vesta to release her grip. Gayla was free.

The famed brunette rushed to the corner of the room. She let the air flood back into her lungs and her head cleared. Vesta again rushed toward her. This time, Gayla rushed back. At the moment of contact, Gayla crouched low and drove her shoulder into Vesta's shins. It was a body tackle to turn the Pittsburgh Steelers green with envy. The heiress did a somersault in the air and landed flat on her back.

Gayla never gave Vesta time to realize what happened. The experienced Amazon slid her arms around Vesta and trapped her in a full-nelson. The muscles in Gayla's arms bulged as she bent Vesta over double. You

(Continued on page 64)

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APARTMENT WRESTLING

(Continued from Page 63)

could see Vesta's shapely legs turn to rubber. The woman was desperate.

What followed next was breathtaking in its courage. Vesta tumbled forward, taking Gayla with her. The tormentor found herself lying on her back, the wind knocked out of her. If the move had not been perfect, Vesta would have broken her own back. Even Samuel Patton was astonished by his granddaughter's bravery.

Vesta should have retreated and gotten back her strength. Instead, she rolled on top of Gayla and started an attack. She twisted her legs and put a scissors lock on Gayla's belly. She squeezed so hard that droplets of perspiration beaded up over her body. Gayla writhed in pain, feeling as if her sides would collapse.

An experienced grappler knows that a scissorslock is only effective over a long period of time. Gayla's look of agony turned to one of relief. She felt Vesta's strength ebb. The legs were weakening. Gayla could have easily broken out of the hold, but she let Vesta squeeze more. Gayla intended to let

Vesta beat herself.

Vesta's legs now ached more than Gayla's sides. The exhausted brunette called on reserves of strength she just didn't have. The legs, almost powerless now, began to tremble spastically. There was a war between Vesta's will to dominate and her body that couldn't stand the strain. If she had only given herself that few moments to recover, doom would not be imminent.

Finally, Vesta's legs sprang apart, her muscles unable to be controlled any longer. Weary, she couldn't defend herself against Gayla's assault. The experienced warrior knew the time was right for attack. This was the magic time for Gayla, when her foe was helpless to prevent the beating.

And a beating it was. Vesta was subjected to a kaleidoscope of maneuvers, each one more savage than its predecessor. Vesta's body was splintered into particles of pain. It was an awesome exhibition of wrestling virtuosity. It was also a horrifying exhibition of human torture.

Then, Gayla stood up, as if to



Gayla makes her move, breaking the scissors lock and mounting her attack. Note the look of agony on Vesta's face as she tries beyond human endurance to maintain her grip upon the dangerous Amazon.

sign the match was over. Somehow, Vesta managed to get to her feet and lunged at Gayla. It was at that point Gayla wrapped her arms around Vesta's head and her legs squeezed Vesta's belly. There was no diminishing of Gayla's power. This is where, in the beginning of our story, men began to scream for the match to be stopped.



Early in the brawl, Vesta leaps on her foe and wraps strong fingers around the alabaster throat of Gayla.

No one knows how long Vesta refused to surrender and Samuel Patton refused to aid his granddaughter. Gayla could feel Vesta's body go slack as the pain increased. Even Gayla's cruel nature rebelled at this torture.

"Surrender!" Gayla demanded and pleaded.

In response, Vesta tried to sink her teeth into Gayla's forearm. She didn't have enough strength to make Gayla even feel it.

Finally, a spectator could stand it no longer. He grabbed Gayla and forced her off Vesta. Free at last, Vesta sank to the carpet. She wept piteously as someone carried her to the bedroom.

Samuel Patton left his guests in the living room and locked himself in the study. He was still there when his chauffeur took his granddaughter back to her apartment. □

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